

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

CHARLYN ZLOTNIK,

Plaintiff,

- against -

BUST INC.

Defendant.

Docket No. 1:18-cv-7343

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

COMPLAINT

Plaintiff Charlyn Zlotnik (“Zlotnik” or “Plaintiff”) by and through her undersigned counsel, as and for her Complaint against Defendant Bust Inc. (“Bust” or “Defendant”) hereby alleges as follows:

NATURE OF THE ACTION

1. This is an action for copyright infringement under Section 501 of the Copyright Act. This action arises out of Defendant’s unauthorized reproduction and public display of a copyrighted photograph of American singer and songwriter Dolly Parton, owned and registered by Zlotnik, a New York based professional photographer. Accordingly, Zlotnik seeks monetary relief under the Copyright Act of the United States, as amended, 17 U.S.C. § 101 *et seq.*

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

2. This claim arises under the Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C. § 101 *et seq.*, and this Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1338(a).

3. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant because Defendant resides in and/or transacts business in New York.

4. Venue is proper in this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b).

PARTIES

5. Zlotnik is a professional photographer in the business of licensing her photographs to online and print media for a fee having a usual place of business at 170 Avenue C, Apt 12A, New York, New York 10009.

6. Upon information and belief, Bust is a domestic business corporation duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of New York, with a place of business at 253 36th Street, Suite C307, Brooklyn, New York 11232. Upon information and belief, Bust is registered with the New York Department of State, Division of Corporations to do business in the State of New York. At all times material, hereto, Bust has owned and operated a website at the URL: www.Bust.com (the “Website”).

STATEMENT OF FACTS

A. Background and Plaintiff’s Ownership of the Photograph

7. Zlotnik photographed American singer and songwriter Dolly Parton (the “Photograph”). A true and correct copy of the Photograph is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

8. Zlotnik is the author of the Photograph and has at all times been the sole owner of all right, title and interest in and to the Photograph, including the copyright thereto.

10. The Photograph was registered with the United States Copyright Office and was given registration number VA 804-358.

B. Defendant’s Infringing Activities

11. Bust ran an article on the Website entitled *31 Fierce Dolly Parton Quotes and Photos to Make Your Day*. See <https://bust.com/entertainment/193537-15-dolly-parton-quotes.html>. The article featured the Photograph. A copy of the article and a screen shot of the Photograph on the Website is attached hereto as Exhibit B.

12. Bust did not license the Photograph from Plaintiff for its article, nor did Bust have Plaintiff's permission or consent to publish the Photograph on its Website.

CLAIM FOR RELIEF
(COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT AGAINST BUST)
(17 U.S.C. §§ 106, 501)

13. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each and every allegation contained in Paragraphs 1-12 above.

14. Bust infringed Plaintiff's copyright in the Photograph by reproducing and publicly displaying the Photograph on the Website. Bust is not, and has never been, licensed or otherwise authorized to reproduce, publically display, distribute and/or use the Photograph.

15. The acts of Defendant complained of herein constitute infringement of Plaintiff's copyright and exclusive rights under copyright in violation of Sections 106 and 501 of the Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C. §§ 106 and 501.

16. Upon information and belief, the foregoing acts of infringement by Bust have been willful, intentional, and purposeful, in disregard of and indifference to Plaintiff's rights.

17. As a direct and proximate cause of the infringement by the Defendant of Plaintiff's copyright and exclusive rights under copyright, Plaintiff is entitled to damages and Defendant's profits pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504(b) for the infringement.

18. Alternatively, Plaintiff is entitled to statutory damages up to \$150,000 per work infringed for Defendant's willful infringement of the Photograph, pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504(c).

19. Plaintiff further is entitled to her attorney's fees and full costs pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 505.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests judgment as follows:

1. That Defendant Bust be adjudged to have infringed upon Plaintiff's copyrights in the Photograph in violation of 17 U.S.C §§ 106 and 501;
2. Plaintiff be awarded either: a) Plaintiff's actual damages and Defendant's profits, gains or advantages of any kind attributable to Defendant's infringement of Plaintiff's Photograph; or b) alternatively, statutory damages of up to \$150,000 per copyrighted work infringed pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504;
3. That Defendant be required to account for all profits, income, receipts, or other benefits derived by Defendant as a result of its unlawful conduct;
4. That Plaintiff be awarded her costs, expenses and attorneys' fees pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 505;
5. That Plaintiff be awarded pre-judgment interest; and
6. Such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury on all issues so triable in accordance with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 38(b).

Dated: Valley Stream, New York
December 25, 2018

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